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By 36 NARA Date 9/21/83

SECRETARY'S 8:00 A.M. STAFF MEETING

Friday, February 21, 1975

PRESENT:

THE SECRETARY OF STATE -- HENRY A. KISSINGER

D - Mr. Ingersoll

P - Mr. Sisco

T - Mr. Maw

AF - Mr. Mulcahy, Acting

ARA - Mr. Rogers

EA - Mr. Habib

EUR - Mr. Lowenstein, Acting

NEA - Mr. Atherton

INR - Mr. Hyland

S/P - Mr. Lord

EB - Mr. Enders

S/PRSS - Mr. Anderson

S/AM - Ambassador McCloskey

PM - Mr. Vest

IO - Mr. Blake, Acting

L - Mr. Leigh

S - Mr. Eagleburger

S/S - Mr. Springsteen

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[Omitted here are portions of the discussion unrelated to the Horn of Africa.]

MR. MULCAHY: As the press indicates, the scope of the Ethiopian request --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I would like to know how it got to the press.

MR. MULCAHY: We think both leaks came from Addis Ababa.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: But from who -- from our people?

MR. MULCAHY: We also think not. We think from

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the Ethiopian Ministry. All the journalists in Addis Ababa, in the two or three instances where we suspected our people might have been talking to them, the Embassy has come back and told us the journalists attribute it to Ethiopian government sources, in the Ministry.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: What is the Embassy position -- that they should do economic development?

MR. MULCAHY: No, sir. I think they have learned that lesson.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: They don't report it any more?

MR. MULCAHY: We just announced \$4.3 million worth of drought relief for rehabilitation assistance.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That will do a lot of good there. Okay. Well, what is your recommendation?

MR. MULCAHY: On the arms resupply, munitions resupply, I think we will come down and be subject to consideration at the WASAG. But on a modest early resupply, which we can do by sending a certain --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: When does the WASAG meet?

MR. MULCAHY: We have not set it yet, sir.

MR. EAGLEBURGER: Wednesday.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: You mean you are going to

wait until Wednesday?

MR. MULCAHY: We could do it earlier, sir. We were told you could not fit it in your schedule before then.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We might be able to fit a decision on this into our schedule.

MR. MULCAHY: Good. We can have a paper ready for you shortly.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Okay.

MR. MULCAHY: DOD, in consultation with the MAG, has come up with a much trimmed down list that could be lifted in by air on our regularly scheduled MAG supply flights to Addis Ababa, without causing any noticeable stir on it. We cannot be sure --

MR. SISCO: I wish I was clearer as to what the balance of forces are in this situation, as to how strong the Eritreans are, how strong the Ethiopians are, and how long this is going to go on. Our people seem to think there is going to be an inconclusive result for a rather extended period. Isn't that really the intelligence?

MR. MULCAHY: Yes. DIA did a pretty good assessment the other day. Their estimate is that the Ethiopian armed forces, even under present circumstances, can continue

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to hold the cities, and with the use of convoys --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That isn't the issue.

The argument for it isn't whether it can conclude the operation, but whether we should not help a country that has a MAG and has been more or less friendly, in reupply of weapons.

MR. MULCAHY: That is right.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I don't assume that this war is going to end -- I think it is going to end with Eritrean independence.

MR. MULCAHY: I am not so completely sure of that myself, sir. I think you will find that the bulk of the insurgents are representative of what we still consider as a Muslim minority there. They are backed by the Arabs. The Coptic half of the population won't gladly suffer domination by a Muslim minority.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Are the Copts black? Are they all black?

MR. MULCAHY: They are not really black. They are all basically Semitic people, with dark skins. They intermarried with the Hamitic people over the centuries.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: So they are Abyssinians.

MR. MULCAHY: They are what we used to call Abyssinians.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: I mean they are like Ethiopians. There is no racial difference?

MR. MULACHY: The Christian populations on both sides of the border are one. The Christians in Eritrea who make up about half or slightly more than half the population there -- actually part and parcel of the Tigrean people, the people of the Tigre province, which has provided many of the dynasties in Ethiopian history. In more recent history, the Amhara, from central Ethiopia, have been dominant.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: How about the Muslims?

MR. MULCAHY: The Muslims tend to come from a large number of tribes, both Semitic, old Semitic, non-Arab stock, and some Hamitic stock along the coast. There are small numbers of tribes completely disparate ethnically one from the other. But there is a very small Arab enclave there in the very northern part of Eritrea. But they date from a migration about 150 years ago from the Yemen. They are not politically or economically important. But the DIA estimate that I mentioned really believes that Ethiopia could hold the country for a fairly long time, while the ELF-PLF are able to control the countryside.

The negotiations, of course, initiated by the Sudanese are continuing in a somewhat desultory fashion.

We don't think the Ethiopians are ready yet to negotiate seriously for a cease-fire. On the other hand, they have taken the initiative of rounding up some of the Christian Eritrean leaders in a committee under the Coptic Bishop of Eritrea to see if they cannot make contacts with the dissident elements and talk peace or cease-fire, arrange some sort of detente.

The Italians reported to us yesterday that they have also been in contact with the Eritreans.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Do they speak Italian in Eritrea?

MR. MULCAHY: It is still the lingua franca, yes. The natives use it among themselves. In the Muslim area they tend to use Arabic, and also Italian. But the Copts and the Muslims tend to use Italian to communicate with each other. It is beginning to disappear. English is replacing Italian, thanks largely to eleven years of British occupation after the war.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Okay. Can I see the paper today?

MR. MULCAHY: We will try to have it ready today -- on the munitions side of it, sir -- the paper for the WASAG meeting is somewhat more extensive and I doubt that we can get it cleared --

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: Who is clearing it?

MR. MULCAHY: We have PM, DOD.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: DOD clears papers for me?

MR. MULCAHY: We can give you our bureau position.

But on the munitions resupply, we would certainly need
DOD input and PM input.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: What do you do -- pre-can
these papers before you go to a WASAG meeting? That is
what the WASAG meeting is there for -- to get the
DOD input.

MR. MULCAHY: We haven't been through a WASAG
meeting ourselves. We have something of a consensus among
the agencies involved at the present time.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Then what is the sense of
the WASAG meeting?

MR. MAW: Stamp of approval.

MR. MULCAHY: I think we do need a stamp of approval.

MR. VEST: We may not have agreement between
ourselves and Defense. You have the WASAG meeting and
these will all be aired.

[Omitted here are portions of the discussion unrelated to the Horn of Africa.]